



Taking Center Stage

**Middle Grades**

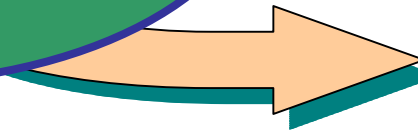


## **Self-Assessment Rubric**

***a 'walk-through' tool for viewing  
student learning and school culture***

### ***Standards-based Education***

- Content Standards
- Performance Levels
- Assessment
- Accountability



**S**uccessful standards-based middle schools are characterized by high-quality student work, enhanced and enabled by excellent teaching and a supportive school culture.



## Middle Grades Self-Assessment Rubric<sup>1</sup>






<p><i>What to look for:</i> Learning focuses on the most important knowledge and skills. The significance of the standards is made clear to all students.</p>	<p><i>What to look for:</i> Learning emphasizes the value of re-doing, polishing, and perfecting work until it represents the highest quality of which students are capable.</p>	<p><i>What to look for:</i> Learning takes place in classrooms where a variety of assessment options are actively used. Students have input in developing the scoring criteria.</p>
<p><i>Evidence of exemplary implementation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers collaborate to identify key standards.</li> <li>Students provided with key standards for year --- they know both where they are going and how today's instruction relates to where they are going.</li> <li>Standards communicated to parents in variety of formats ---parents know both where their student currently is and where student is going.</li> <li>Today's standard(s) visible in room along with pertinent examples of high quality work --- related to standard.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Evidence of exemplary implementation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student investment in own learning is apparent in classroom — students frequently articulate that their effort now will pay dividends later.</li> <li>Classroom develops a culture of “doing our best.” The clear message is that we all do our best always -- - teacher shows by personal examples.</li> <li>Cycles of work / revision apparent – e.g., brainstorming → 1<sup>st</sup> draft → sharing → 2<sup>nd</sup> draft → 3<sup>rd</sup> draft → polished, final, ‘publishable’ product.</li> <li>Teachers provide meaningful feedback that guides student progress.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Evidence of exemplary implementation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wide variety of assessment options are available in classroom — students knowledgeable about each.</li> <li>Evidence of student participation in developing rubrics apparent in classroom. Students review rubrics and provide samples of work at each level.</li> <li>Students can both identify the standard that the instruction is currently addressing, and can also express the best way that they (themselves) could show or demonstrate what they have learned.</li> <li>Students know what they must do next to advance to the next level.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Evidence of beginning implementation:</i></p> <p>Teacher can identify most important standards for grade and content area.</p>	<p><i>Evidence of beginning implementation:</i></p> <p>Teacher asks students to revise major products, such as trimester research reports.</p>	<p><i>Evidence of beginning implementation:</i></p> <p>Teacher uses different assessment strategies for gauging student progress.</p>

<sup>1</sup> Rubric is based on page 122 of *Taking Center Stage* – ‘Major Characteristics of a Middle School Culture Capable of Implementing and Sustaining Standards-Based Education.’

Continued . . .



Taking Center Stage

		
<p><i>What to look for:</i> Learning involves locating information from print and digital sources and validating the quality and integrity of the content.</p>	<p><i>What to look for:</i> Learning occurs in a setting that values participation, cooperation, and collaboration among teachers, administrators, students, and parents.</p>	<p><i>What to look for:</i> Learning occurs in inclusive classrooms that emphasize caring teachers and differentiated instruction.</p>
<p><i>Evidence of exemplary implementation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students actively and regularly use the internet, the library, their textbooks, and newspapers, magazines and other print materials to conduct in-depth research on designated topics.</li> <li>Students regularly evaluate the information that they obtain from a variety of sources, evaluating arguments, connecting information, and detecting potential fallacies.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Evidence of exemplary implementation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students actively and regularly collaborate with each other to provide mutual support and to complete extended, multi-step projects. Every student has a role in the collaborative activities which build on the strengths of each student.</li> <li>Teachers, parents, and administrators work in a collaborative structure that supports everyone.</li> <li>Teaming is strongly emphasized in the classroom and across the whole school.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Evidence of exemplary implementation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers show their care for students by providing a positive student-centered environment and “going the extra mile” to assist students academically and personally.</li> <li>Classroom instruction is differentiated to meet the learning needs of each student.</li> <li>Multiple instructional strategies are regularly observed in the same class.</li> <li>The same standard is addressed in multiple ways.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Evidence of beginning implementation:</i></p> <p>Teacher asks students to conduct research projects various times during the school year.</p>	<p><i>Evidence of beginning implementation:</i></p> <p>Teacher encourages collaboration on some projects, but much work still occurs in near isolation.</p>	<p><i>Evidence of beginning implementation:</i></p> <p>Teacher respects students and attempts to meet individual learning needs by some differentiation.</p>



## Continued . . .



<p><i>What to look for:</i> Learning occurs in classrooms that honor the richness of human diversity. The contributions of all ethnic, linguistic, and cultural traditions are celebrated.</p>	<p><i>What to look for:</i> Learning occurs in an attractive setting — no matter how old the school — that says to the students and faculty: <i>Education is valued here.</i></p>	<p><i>What to look for:</i> Learning emphasizes direct and frequent interaction with real-life experiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Field trips</li> <li>• World of work</li> <li>• School-to-career</li> <li>• Mentorships</li> </ul>
<p><i>Evidence of exemplary implementation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ethnic, linguistic and cultural differences are valued and honored on a frequent, on-going basis.</li> <li>• Classroom provides a rich set of culturally and linguistically responsive teaching strategies in order to maximize the learning of individual students.</li> <li>• Parents are valued and fully included in the learning process. Communication with parents occurs in languages and contexts that parents understand and use to enhance student learning.</li> <li>• California's English-language Development Standards are actively used to plan appropriate lessons for students.</li> <li>• Assessment occurs in ways that allow students to demonstrate their grasp of the standards --- translation and support services and tools are provided as needed to support individual students.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Evidence of exemplary implementation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom is neat, attractive, engaging and inviting. The classroom supports student learning.</li> <li>• Spaces are organized for both quiet, individual learning and active group involvement.</li> <li>• Teachers and students take pride in their school and in its classrooms.</li> <li>• Evidence that student work is valued is apparent in the classroom.</li> <li>• Students know that learning and their own efforts to learn are highly valued in the school and classroom.</li> <li>• Positive rules and student-centered policies create a sense of caring.</li> <li>• Students have ready access to a variety of technology and can use this technology to enhance their learning.</li> <li>• Library / media center are actively integrated into all aspects of learning in all content areas.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Evidence of exemplary implementation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are provided many opportunities to connect their classroom learning with “real world” applications through opportunities like service learning and school/community service.</li> <li>• Field trips and career exploration opportunities often support in-the-class instruction. The same standards are taught both in the classroom and through real-life extension opportunities.</li> <li>• Students’ understanding of themselves is fostered through close relationship with faculty and/or adult mentors.</li> <li>• Exploratory classes and clubs extend students’ learning.</li> <li>• Student activities and athletics give many students opportunities for leadership and team-building.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Evidence of beginning implementation:</i> Teacher is participating in CLAD / BCLAD training and is becoming sensitive to the linguistic and cultural needs of students.</p>	<p><i>Evidence of beginning implementation:</i> Teacher is actively working to improve the classroom learning environment and is seeking resources and support for these improvements.</p>	<p><i>Evidence of beginning implementation:</i> School has many clubs and athletic teams to encourage student involvement.</p>



## Continued . . .



<p><i>What to look for:</i> Active learning develops student academic proficiency through creative work that involves problem solving and complex reasoning.</p>	<p><i>What to look for:</i> Learning occurs in a classroom that emphasizes the capability of <u>all</u> students to do high quality work and the meet / exceed the standards in all content areas for their grade.</p>	<p><i>What to look for:</i> Learning occurs in a context that values fairness, equity, justice, honor, civility, service to others, and democratic principles.</p>
<p><i>Evidence of exemplary implementation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Classroom includes many instructional strategies to engage all students and ensure that each and every student masters the standards.</li> <li>Teachers with a <b>passion</b> for learning create rigorous, developmentally appropriate and engaging lessons and activities that fully involve all students.</li> <li>Each student is fully engaged in his/her own learning.</li> <li>Students are motivated to work hard in order to achieve at the highest levels possible.</li> <li>All students engage in work that requires creativity, problem-solving and complex reasoning everyday in every class.</li> <li>Teachers work to understand students' perspective and find ways to accommodate lessons and learning to these perspectives.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Evidence of exemplary implementation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School and classroom teacher create an environment that fosters a community of learners. In this community, every one is expected to do their best all the time.</li> <li>Support is provided to students who may be struggling. This support is based on early identification of the standards which the students have not mastered and prompt assistance to meet these needs. School and classroom teacher actively monitor student success in each skill area.</li> <li>Differentiated instruction is the classroom norm. Each student is provided multiple opportunities to learn the content through multiple modalities.</li> <li>Scaffolding is actively used to support students who may be struggling.</li> <li>Writing and reading are integrated processes that are used in all content areas to support learning.</li> <li>Extra time is provided for students who come to the middle grades performing below grade level.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Evidence of exemplary implementation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students know that they are safe and that their teacher values fairness, equity, and justice.</li> <li>Students have many opportunities to express their opinions, to cast their votes, and to develop their own personal perspective.</li> <li>Civility is based on mutual respect --- teachers respect students and students respect teachers.</li> <li>Most important decisions are made collaboratively by those who will be most impacted by the decision.</li> <li>Service to others is a characteristic of students, faculty, and the whole school community.</li> <li>Fairness, equity, and personal respect are evident throughout the school and the classroom.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Evidence of beginning implementation:</i></p> <p>Teacher engages students through long-term, multi-step projects that require research and synthesis of information.</p>	<p><i>Evidence of beginning implementation:</i></p> <p>Teacher provides extra support for students having difficulties.</p>	<p><i>Evidence of beginning implementation:</i></p> <p>Student councils provide some students leadership opportunities. Appropriate behavior is supported within the school.</p>